Vol. VI. Numb. 93

THE OBSERVATOR.

The Happineſs of this Nation in preſerving our Parliamentary Conſtitution, diſcours'd of. More Remarks on the clandeſtine Wooll Trade betwixt Ireland *and* France. *The Opinion of the Houſe of Lords for maintaining and improving our Naval Power; and of a Number of Men of War to be kept at* Jamaica.

From **Saturday**, January 17. to **Wednesday**, January 21. 1708.

Country-m. WELL, Maſter, I muſt pray you now to go on with your farther Remarks upon the Book, entitl'd, *A brief Account of the Woollen Manufactory of* England, *with Relation to the Prejudice it receives from the clandeſtine Exportation of Wooll from* Ireland *to* France, which you begun with on *Wedneſday* the ſeventh Inſtant.

Obſ. I will, *Roger*, tho' we have no Encouragement to meddle with that, or any other Thing, by which the Nation is aggriev'd, but the Satisfaction of doing all we can to ſerve our Country; for you may perceive, that Calumny and Slander muſt be the Lot of all ſuch as put their Hand to any good Work of that Kind. Thus the Author of this Book, as he tells us in his Preface, is reflected upon, *becauſe of his Endeavours to prevent this ruinous clandeſtine Trade, as a deſigning Man, who only wants an Office; and that he has advanc'd no Fact in his whole Treatiſe*, which has oblig'd him now to add an Appendix, with Matter of Fact to the Purpoſe.

Country-m. I can apprehend no other Deſign in this Sort of Management, Maſter, but to tire out, and ruin the Complainers, that ſo ill Men may abuſe her Majeſty, and their Country, without Controul. But, bleſſed be God, we have ſtill a Parliament, whoſe proper Buſineſs it is, to enquire into, and redreſs all Grievances, and who are above the *Crown-Office*, or the Slander of Under-ſpur-leathers.

Obſ. Aye, *Roger*, that's our particular Happineſs, for ought I know, above all Monarchies of the World, and I pray God to preſerve it to us; for ſome of our Neighbours have their Parliaments quite taken away, others have them garbl'd, and nothing but Rumps of them left; ſome have 'em ſo imperfect, that whatever their Inclination be to ſerve their Country, they can do no more, than juſt what their Courts think fit to allow them. But, Thanks to Heaven for it, our Conſtitution is ſtill entire, and our Parliament in a Condition to exert their ancient Power and Authority, tho' Scriblers and Tools of ſeveral Sorts have been employ'd, from Time to Time, to defame and run 'em down; tho' ſometimes Courts have laid them totally aſide for a dozen Years together, ſometimes they have hector'd and garbl'd them by Military Force, ſometimes they have ſo penſion'd them, that they turn'd Traitors to their Country, ſometimes they have endeavour'd to have the whole Power of returning the Commons in their own Hands, ſometimes they have turn'd them off when they came to enquire into Grievances, and ſometimes they have ſo fill'd them by brib'd Elections, with Officers and Men of Poſts, that they ſeem'd to conſiſt wholly of the Servants of the Crown. But, bleſſed be God, the Strength of the *Engliſh* Conſtitution is ſuch, that we have overcome all thoſe dangerous Symptoms, and made the Deſigns of ſeveral ſucceſſive Courts to annul, garble, or alloy our Parliaments, of no Effect.

Country-m. We have Reaſon to thank God for it, Maſter, that we have ſtill a Parliament capable and willing to enquire into our Grievances, and redreſs them, and that they go on with ſo much Satisfaction to the Nation, whom they repreſent, to find out and remove all thoſe Things which may obſtruct and endanger our Trade and Safety. This gives us Hopes, that the clandeſtine Trade of *Ireland*, to ruin our Manufactory, will be effectually prevented, and that the Author of the Book now under Conſideration, if he make out his Allegations, will find Juſtice from the two Houſes, tho' he has miſs'd of it elſewhere.

Obſ. I don't queſtion it, *Roger*; and therefore ſhall go on with my Account of it, as one of thoſe firſt-Rate Grievances, which deſerve the Conſideration of our Repreſentatives. The Gentleman lays down this Propoſition at firſt, *That Wooll is our ſtaple Commodity, and the Fountain of all our Power and Riches*; in which Dr. *Davenant* concurs with him, in his Eſſay upon the *Eaſt India* Trade, p. 8. where he ſays, *As Bread is call'd the Staff of Life, ſo the Woollen Manufacture is truly the principal Nouriſhment of our Body politick - - -, and therefore is undoubtedly, by Laws, and all poſſible Care, to be encourag'd; but 'tis Exportation of it Abroad, and not the Conſumption of it at Home, that muſt bring Profit to the Kingdom.* Yet, notwithſtanding that this has been the general Senſe of the Nation, ever ſince we made any Figure in Trade, which has rais'd our Cuſtoms from 40000 *l. per Ann.* in Queen *Elizabeth*'s Time, to 510769 *l.* 13 *s. per Ann.* as Dr. *Davenant* computed the Tonnage and Poundage only, beſides the new Impoſts, or additional Duties in 1688. Such has been the criminal Neglect of ſome People, that this clandeſtine Trade betwixt *Ireland* and *France*, has been carry'd on for many Years, not only without any effectual Method to prevent it, but the Gentleman who propos'd ſuch a Method, has been rather left to ſtarve, than encourag'd, as he tells us in his Preface. But I go on.

Page 2. he informs us, "That in the Parliament "1696. many Votes were paſs'd, and ſtrenuous Re- "ſolutions made in the Houſe of Commons, upon "ſome Complaints of Clothiers from the *Weſt*, who "thought themſelves highly injur'd by the clande- "ſtine Trade of *Ireland*; ſo that in the 1ſt, 7th, 8th, "9th, 10th, and 11th of the late King, ſeveral Acts "were made; ſome of which, chiefly related to *Ire-* "*land*; and her Majeſty, in ſeveral Speeches to her "two Houſes, has put them in Mind of this im- "portant Matter; notwithſtanding which, ill "minded People, with the greateſt Hazard to them- "ſelves, ſent Wooll into *France* from *Rumney*-Marſh, "and the adjacent Coaſts of *Kent* and *Suſſex*, 'till "the Laws were ſtrictly put in Execution, and "Officers were eſtabliſh'd on thoſe Coaſts, under "Capt. *Baker*, ſo as in a Manner totally to diſap- "point the *French* of Wooll from hence; which o- "blig'd them to take the following Method.

"Upon our late Breach with *Spain*, the *French* "Court form'd ſeveral Projects to ſuplpy the *Spaniards* "with Cloaths, and contracted with them for ſeve- "ral Woollen Commodities; which, 'till that Time, "had been furniſh'd from *England*; but being diſ- "appointed as to their former clandeſtine Trade "with *Rumney*-Marſh, *&c.* they conſulted ſeveral "Popiſh Merchants, who follow'd the late King "*James*, ſettles themſelves in the *Weſtern* Ports of "*France*, and ever ſince have carry'd on a clande- "ſtine Trade from thoſe Parts with *Ireland*.

"Particularly in 1701. ſeveral of the beſt Mer-

chants

" chants in *France* being imploy'd by the Miniſtry " there, they form'd the two following Projects. 1. " To engroſs the whole Trade of the *Spaniſh* Mo- " narchy in the *Weſt Indies*, by a joint Stock of " 6000000 of Livres, whereof the *French* King ſub- " ſcrib'd two, and the King of *Spain* one, and the " other three were ſubſcrib'd by the Subjects of the " two Crowns; and the ſending any Effects to the " *Weſt Indies* by the Galleons, but what were of the " Growth and Produce of the two Crowns, was " forbid, under ſevere Penalties. By this Means " they hop'd to ſecure themſelves all the Treaſures " of *America*, and have at this Time above 30 Ships " trading in the *South Seas*, who bring vaſt Quan- " tities of Bullion directly from thence to *France*.

Country-m. We find by the publick News, Maſter, that there is Truth in this; and the *French* King finds that Trade ſo beneficial to his own Subjects, and ſo ruinous to us, that he deſpiſes all the Remonſtrances of the *Spaniards*, who are uneaſy to find the Trade wreſted from themſelves by the *French*. This, and what the Author of the Book ſays, makes it evident, that there's an abſolute Neceſſity for us to do all that is poſſible, to recover the *Weſt India* Trade out of the Hands of *France*, as we would avoid our own Ruin, and haſten that of the haughty *Nimrod*, who oppreſſes all Mankind, without Reſpect to Friends or Foes, where ever his Power can reach.

Obſ. The Parliament have thoſe Things under Conſideration, *Roger*; and I doubt not, will take effectual Care to recover our own Trade in thoſe Parts, and ruin that of *France*; for which, our noble Patriots, the Lords, have ſhew'd ſo much Zeal, from Time to Time, and particularly in their Addreſs to her Majeſty of the 31ſt of *March*, 1704. that had their Advice been follow'd, both might have been effected long ago.

Country-m. God bleſs them, Maſter, I love them, and every Thing that comes from them; pray tell me what their Advice was?

Obſ. Why, *Roger*, not one Word of the Babbler's wiſe Project of marching Land Armies to take the *French* King's unacceſſible Sea-port Towns; but their Lordſhips, anſwerable to the great Dignity and Judgment of their Houſe, ſhew a particular Regard to our Fleet, and deſire, " A diſtinguiſhing Care " may be had of that part of the Adminiſtration " relating to Maritime Affairs; that the Glory of " the *Engliſh* Nation, ſo renown'd in all Times at " Sea, may be preſerv'd in its higheſt Reputation, " during her Majeſty's happy Reign; and that the " Naval Strength of this Kingdom, in which her " Subjects have a ſingular Satisfaction, as well as " Security, may be maintain'd and improv'd by all " proper Means, eſpecially by the encouraging of " the Sea-men, and obſerving the ancient and ſtrict " Diſcipline of the Navy, to the immortal Honour " of her Majeſty's Government, in the Defence of " her own Kingdom, and the moſt effectual reſtrain- " ing the Power of her Enemies.

Country-m. Then I perceive, Maſter, that our noble Houſe of Lords is of Opinion, that our Security and Glory are to be provided for chiefly by maintaining and improving our own Naval Strengh; and that they think this the moſt effectual Way of reſtraining the Power of our Enemies: And ſince it is ſo, and that their Lordſhips communicated their Senſe of this Matter to the whole Nation, by ordering their Addreſs to be printed, I wonder how any Under-ſpur-leather ſhould have the Impudence to oppoſe it in Print!

Obſ. Look ye, *Roger*, Men who are Caſe-harden'd, are not capable of Shame; you may make them grin, but it's impoſſible to make them bluſh. The Libeller, in his *Dyet of Poland*, and other paultry Efforts of his mercenary Pen, has thrown all the Dirt he could upon moſt of our Nobility, and has treated ſome of them by Name, as if they were upon the ſame Level of Obſcurity and Scandal with himſelf. But I go on. Our noble Patriots, the Lords in the ſame Addreſs, repreſent to her Majeſty " That the Iſland of *Jamaica* affords good Recep- " on for great Numbers of her Majeſty's Men o " War, to defend that important Place, and to an- " noy the Enemy on all Hands, who have o " ſome open Roads and Harbours of no great D " fence to their Shipping - - - -; therefore they d " ſire, that ſuch a Number of Ships of War m " be conſtantly maintain'd there, or reliev'd fro " Time to Time, that there may not want a ſuffi- " cient Strength at Sea to defend her Majeſty's ow " Subjects, and annoy her Enemy's in thoſe Parts " which will likewiſe prove of very conſiderabl " Advantage to her Majeſty's Service in all her othe " Dominions.

Country-m. Pray, Maſter, what was there done in this Matter?

Obſ. You muſt ask no ſuch Queſtions, *Roger*, but leave it to their Lordſhips and the Commons, whom I pray God to bleſs and direct in all thoſe noble and uſeful Enquiries they are now a making.

Advertiſements.

This Day is publiſh'd,

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¶ Any Gentleman, who us'd to ſend Notice of Things formerly to Mr. Tutchin, are deſir'd now to direct them to H. Meere, at the Black-Fryar in Black-Fryars, for the Obſervator, Poſt pay'd. Where Advertiſements are taken in.

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